

REMARKS**Status of the Claims**

Claims 3, 5, 6, and 19 are currently present in the Application, and claim 19 is an independent claim. Claims 3, 5, and 6 have been amended to depend from allowable independent claim 19. Claims 1, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 18, 20, and 21 have been canceled. Applicants are not conceding in this Application that those canceled claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully reserve the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuation and/or divisional patent applications.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 19-21 are indicated as allowable over the prior art of record.

Claims 2, 8, and 14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

As noted above, Applicants have amended claims 3, 5, and 6 to depend from allowable independent claim 19, and have canceled claims 1, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, 18, 20, and 21. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that claims 3, 5, 6, and 19 are allowable.

Claim Rejections – Alleged Obviousness Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 5-7, 9, 11-13, 15, and 17-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kupiec, U.S. Patent No. 6,533,822 (hereinafter Kupiec) in view of Emerson et al., U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0261035 (hereinafter Emerson). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

As noted above, Applicants have canceled claims 1, 7, 9, 11-13, 15, 17, and 18, and therefore the rejections to these claims are now moot.

Conclusion

As a result of the foregoing, it is asserted by Applicants that the remaining claims in the Application are in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request an early allowance of such claims.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the Applicants' attorney listed below if the Examiner believes that such a discussion would be helpful in resolving any remaining questions or issues related to this Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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